

## Exercise Prepares Iraqi Commanders

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel  
122nd MPAD

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- Officers of the 301st and 307th Iraqi National Guard Battalions, under the supervision of the First Team's 39th Brigade Combat Team, recently completed a three-day Command Post Exercise (CPX) at Camp Taji designed to enhance the fighting effectiveness of Iraqi Security Forces.

The main objective of the CPX is to teach staff-level officers how to work together. As American Soldiers know and the Iraqi Soldiers are learning, a command staff is broken down into sections. Each section is responsible for one piece of an operation for example; one section is responsible for intelligence, another for civil military operations and so on.

"[The ING officers] are at point in their training cycle where an exercise of this nature is appropriate," said Maj. Michael Warrington from Sherwood, Ore., an observer controller with 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment. "It allows them to take what we've taught them so far and apply it

as well as giving us, the trainers, a chance to see where we might need to focus some of our attention in future training sessions."

This was the second CPX the 39th BCT has hosted for the ING since assuming responsibility for their training. While the staff has improved since their first exercise, Warrington said the group was still in the "crawl" phase.

"We're using the Army training methodology of crawl, walk, run...and we are still very much in the crawl phase," he said. "With that in mind, the main focus of this CPX isn't necessarily on the correct resolution of battlefield scenarios, right now we're more concerned with getting the staff to work together effectively."

Warrington explained that for many of the ING staff officers, old counter-productive mentalities existed. This was a problem that was addressed early in the exercise.

"In the old regime, information was power," he said. "So officers learned very quickly to keep information to themselves. That's counter to everything we teach and how we operate, so very early on in



By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Staff officers of the 301st Iraqi National Guard Battalion discuss the best methods in which to recover a disabled vehicle during a Command Post Exercise coordinated by the 39th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division on Camp Taji.

the exercise we addressed the issue stressing the importance of sharing information between the sections."

Each day the exercise stops long enough for the observers and staff officers to conduct an after action review (AAR). The group analyzes what went well and what did not and then proposes solutions

to the problems.

"The stopping each day to analyze what we did wrong really helps," said the 301st ING Battalion's planning officer. "I've learned that I can make mistakes here and that it's okay, we're learning and getting better each time."

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## Louisiana Guardsmen Join First Team

By Spc. Erin Robicheaux  
256th BCT Public Affairs

CAMP BLACK JACK, Baghdad -- The Louisiana National Guard's 256th Tiger Brigade arrived in the Iraqi capital Nov. 4 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III. After months of training and preparation the brigade combat team is gearing up for their mission under the leadership of Brig. Gen. John Basilica, Jr.

"We are proud to become members of the 1st Cavalry Division's First Team,"

Basilica said. "We are here to make a difference and to help finish the job."

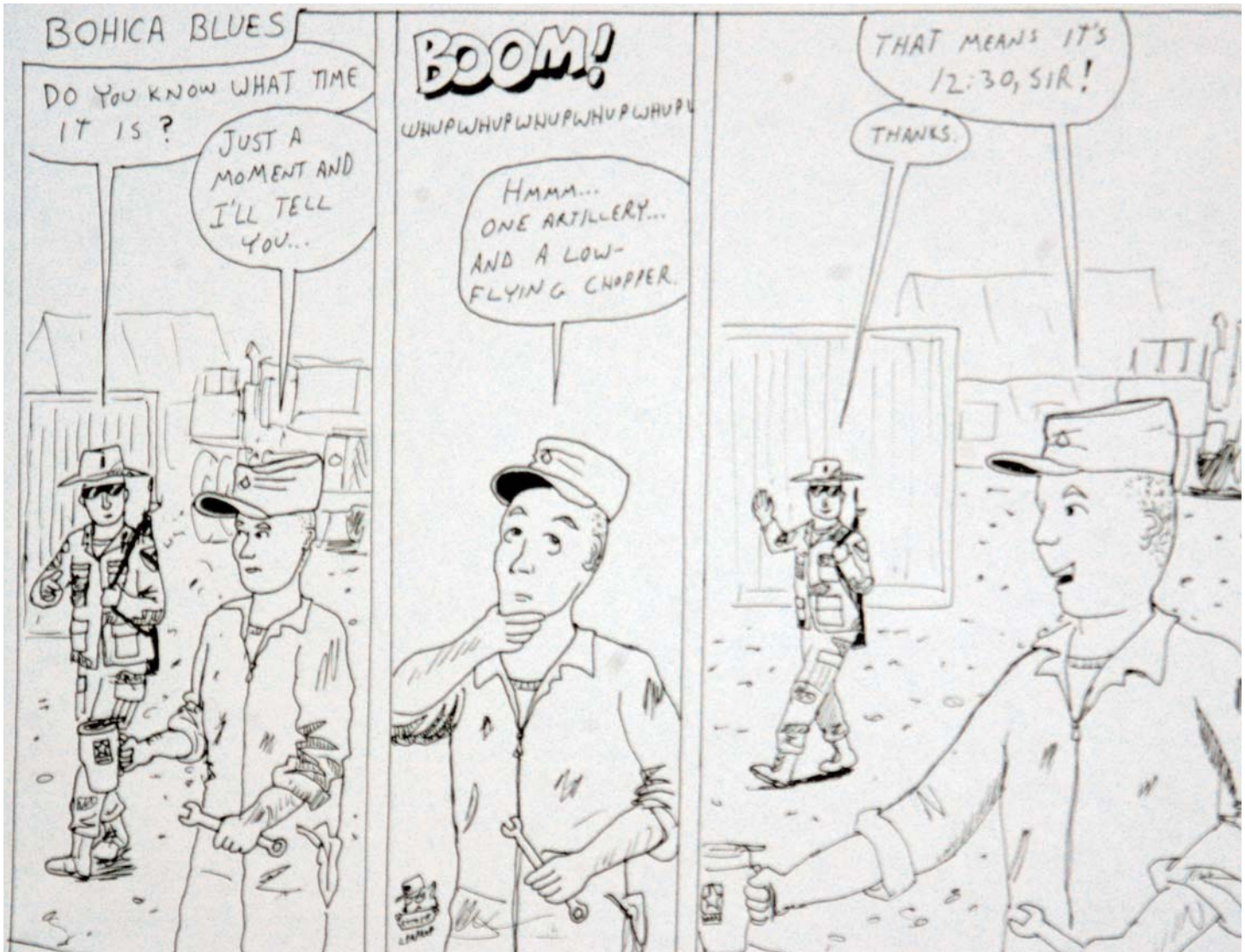
Just like the Cajun delicacy from the unit's home state, the 256th BCT is a gumbo of additional units. Attached to the Louisiana brigade are units from New York, Minnesota, Washington, Wisconsin, and Illinois. The six states came together in May and trained for six months at Fort Hood, Texas, then deployed for Kuwait in October. Following a few more weeks of training they began the march north to

Baghdad. Spc. Robert Baker of Headquarters Company, 199th Forward Support Battalion, said that the convoy north was stressful.

"Because of what we see on the news and the different stories that we have heard, we all had some fear and anxiety," he said.

But Baker added that the fear and adrenaline was also what kept him and his fellow Soldiers alert and aware of their surroundings at all times.

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By Staff Sgt. Christopher Grant, 411th Engineer Battalion

Bohica Blues cartoons are drawn by Staff Sgt. Christopher Grant, of the 411th Engineer Battalion from Boise, Idaho. His battalion is attached to the 1st Cavalry Division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II. Grant says he draws cartoons as a way to present his and his Soldiers' opinions to the world. His work is also displayed at the the Antelope (Engineer) dining facility on Camp Al-Tahreer.

## Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

**Pleased to meet you.**  
**tasharrafaa.**

### Saturday

High: 84  
Low: 62



### Sunday

High: 80  
Low: 60



### Monday

High: 82  
Low: 62



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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## News Notes

### Excuse Me, I Seem to be Lost

POWAY, Calif. (AP) -- A woman robbed a credit union of at least \$3,000 and then asked a teller for directions to another bank, authorities said. The woman handed a note demanding money to a teller at the Great American Credit Union in Poway. The note also asked for directions to a nearby San Diego County Credit Union branch in San Diego, the sheriff's department said. Deputies searched the area around the Great American Credit Union but were unable to find the suspect. They notified the San Diego County Credit Union that the robber had asked for directions to that site. The FBI is investigating.

### It's All in Their Best Interests...

MILFORD, Conn. (AP) -- Cupcakes became contraband at Meadowside elementary school, after Principal Robert Davis banned all celebratory sweets - a move that has made some parents sour. Health officials said Davis adopted a new policy of using games and crafts instead of baked goods to fete birthdays, holidays and special occasions, and praised it as a way to combat childhood obesity. Parent Jack Fowler said no one should dictate what students can bring to school for special events. Mayor James L. Richetelli Jr. said as a parent he can understand health and school officials' concern regarding food allergies and childhood obesity, but cupcakes should remain.

## Army Bull Rider Takes World Title

LAS VEGAS (Army News Service) -- The Army celebrated its first Professional Bull Riding title as 21-year-old Mike Lee clinched the Built Ford Tough Series World Championship Oct. 31 at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas.

Lee set a record by winning both the overall PBR World Championship title as well as the Built Ford Tough World Finals Championship, awarded to the bull rider who scores the most points in the seven-day competition.

"I'm so proud to bring home the championship not only for my family and me, but for all of the Soldiers protecting our freedom around the world," said Lee. "I am blessed with a great group of supporters, and even though I am the only one out there on the back of that bull, I could not have come out with the title without this team behind me."

Wearing the signature black and gold colors of the U.S. Army, Lee conquered Geronimo in the seventh round to seal his third consecutive win and boost his overall standings in the BFTS. Lee then met Mossy Oak Mudslinger in the short round and held on for a full eight seconds to earn a total of 12,138.24 points for the year and clinch the BFTS World Championship.

"We could not be more proud of Mike for this tremendous accomplishment in the first year of the Army's relationship with PBR," said Col. Thomas Nickerson, director of Strategic Outreach for U.S. Army Accessions Command. "One of the reasons we support Mike and the other Army bull riders, Jaron Nunnemaker and James White, is because they and all bull riders have the same qualities we look for in Soldiers. Together they illustrate how experience, training and a clear vision of goals can make you stronger now and in the future."



Army News Service

Mike Lee, sponsored by the U.S. Army, holds on to clinch the Built Ford Tough Series World Championship Oct. 31.



Austin American-Statesman

Lanier High School junior varsity football player Daniel Almazan, 16, walks to practice Wednesday in Austin, Texas. The varsity team is undefeated in district and plays another undefeated team, McCallum, for first place Friday night.

## Wizards Cast a Spell on New Bobcats

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) -- Pondering whether a close loss in their NBA debut was a moral victory for the expansion Charlotte Bobcats, Emeka Okafor did his best cheerleader impersonation.

"I guess you see those movies where everyone is like, 'Yeah! At least you guys were in there!'" he said, arms in the air and mock glee in his voice. "I guess I'd rather lose the way we did then get blown out. But I want to win."

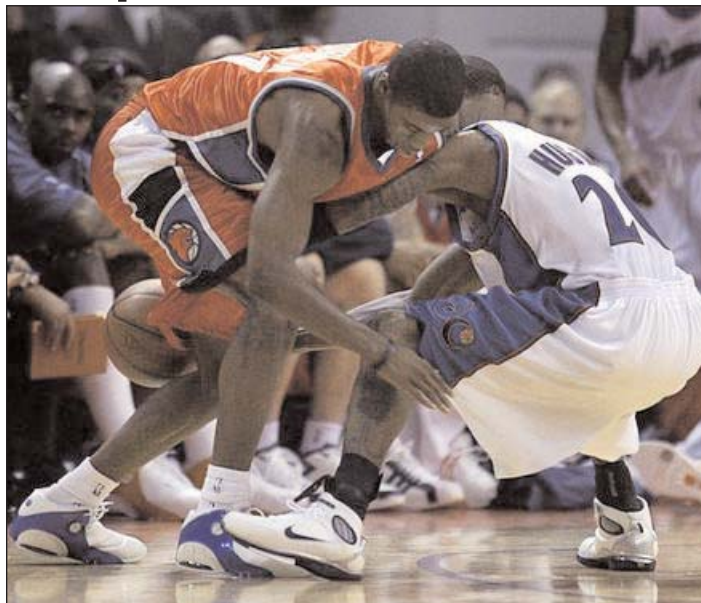
That might take awhile.

The Bobcats marked the NBA's return to Charlotte after a two-year absence with an entertaining and hard-fought 103-96 loss to the Washington Wizards on Thursday night.

Replacing the Hornets after they moved to New Orleans in 2002, the Bobcats are expected to struggle mightily this season. Still, they were in this one late as they tried to become the third consecutive expansion team to win its NBA debut, following Vancouver and Toronto (1995).

The effort impressed Washington.

"They played really hard and have a lot of key components - it was kind of hard to call them an expansion team,"



Washington Wizards' Larry Hughes, right, and Charlotte Bobcats' Bernard Robinson wrestle for a loose ball during the third quarter at the Charlotte Coliseum in Charlotte, N.C. Thursday.

said Antawn Jamison, who led the Wizards with 24 points. "They've got some talented guys ... they will get a lot of upsets."

Charlotte coach Bernie Bickerstaff seemed disappointed.

"We weren't good enough tonight," he said. "It wasn't because we lacked or didn't want it. Some of them may

have wanted it too bad. I don't know whether any of them had stage fright."

Actually, it was just poor execution in the final quarter, when youth and inexperience were obvious.

"They made shots and we didn't," House said. "That will come. I think we did all right for a group that hasn't been together very long."

## Former Gators Coach Withdraws from Candidacy

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (AP) -- If Steve Spurrier decides to coach again, it won't be at his alma mater.

Spurrier withdrew his name from consideration Thursday to replace Ron Zook, saying his time at Florida has passed.

The announcement relieves any reservations boosters and school officials had regarding Spurrier's potential return. It also opens up a coaching search that was widely considered Spurrier's to lose.

"He said he's done his thing here and he just thinks it's better for us to go find a coach who will be here for the next 10 or 15 years," ath-

letic director Jeremy Foley said.

The Gators won six Southeastern Conference championships and the 1996 national title under Spurrier. He posted 122 victories over 12 seasons, tormented opponents with his offensive flair and witty one-liners, and left town with the best winning percentage in league history.

Zook, hired in 2002 after Spurrier left to coach the Washington Redskins, was fired last week after the latest in a series of embarrassing losses - a 38-31 defeat by lowly Mississippi State.

"When I departed three years ago, there were several reasons why I believed it was

time to move on," Spurrier said. "Other than simply wanting to coach in the NFL someday, I also believed that 12 years at Florida was probably long enough. Many people in football believe that around 10-12 years in the same job is about the maximum time a coach should stay."

With Thursday's announcement there was almost immediate talk that Spurrier would end up in Miami with the Dolphins - even though Dave Wannstedt has not been fired.

"I have not been offered any coaching job by any team, and I'm not searching for one," Spurrier said.

## In Brief

### Piracy of Movies Could Cost You

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) -- Movie studios and the Motion Picture Association of America said on Thursday they would sue individuals suspected of illegally distributing movies over the Internet. The music industry has led the way with such lawsuits targeting major traders of song files who use Kazaa and other programs to swap songs on the Web. The MPAA, the trade group representing Hollywood's major studios, said its members would launch suits claiming copyright violation on Nov. 16. The civil suits will seek to stop trading as well as damages of up to \$30,000 per film, adding that damages could reach \$150,000 if the infringement was deemed willful.

### Monet Painting Sells for \$20 Mil

NEW YORK (AP) -- A painting from Claude Monet's series on London's House of Parliament has sold at auction for \$20.1 million. "London, the Parliament, Effects of Sun in the Fog," painted in 1904, was purchased by Samir Traboulsi, a Lebanese financier, at Christie's. The impressionist work, which depicts orange and red light piercing London's fog, had been in the same family, that of Monet's dealer, Paul Durand-Ruel, for 100 years. Its presale estimate had been \$12 to \$18 million. The sale of impressionist and modern art brought a total of \$128.2 million in the first of a two-day auction at Christie's.

# 39th Trains ING Leaders on Teamwork

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By end of the second day of the exercise, the sections were working with each other to address and solve one of the many problems that affect a fighting army.

"We've given them scenarios straight out of what we've dealt with here," said North Little Rock, Ark. resident Sgt.

Maj. Roger Easley, brigade operations sergeant major. "Things like setting up a traffic control point and then while they're convoying their forces out to the location we hit them with an [improvised explosive device] so they then have to react to that."

Easley is part of the exercise's White Cell. In the operation, the White Cell is responsible

for giving the battalions problems they must face.

"The white cell acts as a brigade level entity; issuing orders, or problems, down to the battalion level," said Maj. Michael Spraggins, CPX coordinator and brigade fire support officer. "It is then the responsibility of the battalion to issue orders and guidance down to their subordinate units as well as report back to the brigade element what their plan of action is."

In the White Cell, the walls are covered with paper tracking the time difference of problems issued to tasking acknowledgement, how it was handled and whether the necessary reports needed for each action had been received.

"Both battalions as a whole are doing very well," Spraggins said. "They're doing a very good job of writing reports and showing themselves to be good decision makers."

Warrington agreed that the officers are doing well with the training but said that the exercise was a learning experience for both the U.S. Soldiers as well as the ING Soldiers.

"The ING are handling some of the situations in ways we wouldn't," he said. "They



The 301st Iraqi National Guard Battalion planning officer (right) plots updated information received from the intelligence officer (left) during a Command Post Exercise recently hosted for the 301st and 307th ING Battalions by the 39th Brigade Combat Team.

have a knowledge gained from this being their home; understanding the local traditions, power structures...things like that and we are learning ways to perhaps adjust our tactics. So this has been a learning experience for everyone."



Photos by Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Maj. Andres de Kunffy, of Fort Smith, Ark., observer controller and brigade information officer, 39th Brigade Combat Team sits with a major from the 301st Iraq National Guard Battalion discussing identified issues during a recent Command Post Exercise designed to enhance the fighting effectiveness of the 301st and 307th NG Battalions.

## Tiger Brigade Soldiers Join Forces with 1st Cav.

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"It was just like being a football player in a high school championship game," he said. "We went over the plays, or battle drills, in our heads and there was a lot of anticipation just before we rolled out. We made sure that we knew what to do."

Since their arrival, the Soldiers of the 256th have been preparing to assume their mission. Cody Thibodeaux of Company A, 1088th Engineer Battalion, is pleasantly surprised by his living conditions. Other than missing his family, Thibodeaux hasn't had to sacrifice much of anything.

"The gym and food are unbelievable," he said. "I was worried about what kind of workout facilities would be available to us, but I'm very impressed."

The 3,700 Soldiers of the Tiger Brigade are going through pre-combat checks and inspections. When asked of



By Spc. Erin Robicheaux, 256th BCT Public Affairs

A long line of 256th Brigade Combat Team vehicles reaches its final destination: Camp Black Jack in Baghdad. The Louisiana-based brigade's final convoys arrived from Kuwait Nov. 4. The unit joins the 1st Cavalry Division, maintaining security in the Iraqi capital.

how he would describe the area to his loved ones back home, Thibodeaux reflected on one of his favorite television shows.

"This is our own version of M.A.S.H.," he said, " ... with the tents, the choppers, and the mud. I almost feel like a cast member."